

VZCZCXRO2995  
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW  
DE RUEHBUL #3182/01 2630921  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 200921Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0353  
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 003182

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG  
NSC FOR JWOOD  
OSD FOR SHIVERS  
CG CJTF-82, POLAD, JICCENT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/08/2017

TAGS: [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: FOUR NEW GOVERNORS APPOINTED AS NEW GOVERNANCE  
CZAR TAKES OFFICE

REF: A. KABUL 3054  
[B](#). KABUL 2505  
[C](#). KABUL 2998

Classified By: Charge Christopher Dell for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

SUMMARY

-----  
[1](#)1. (C) President Karzai has approved the appointments of new governors in Jowzjan, Faryab, Ghazni, and Uruzgan provinces. The appointments in Faryab and Jowzjan fill vacancies. The appointee in Uruzgan may have benefited from an early assertion by the new Director General of the Office of Local Administration, Ghulam Jelani Popal, of his influence with Karzai. Both the Faryab and Ghazni appointees have aroused our concern. Karzai probably probably hopes their appointment will help him balance competing political factions and bring opponents into the tent. We are looking forward to an early opportunity to engage Popal on his new responsibilities. END SUMMARY.

FOUR NEW GOVERNORS APPPOINTED

-----  
[1](#)2. (SBU) The policy director of the new Office of Local Administration, Barna Karimi, told POLOFF on September 11 that President Karzai has approved the appointments of four new governors: Hashim Zari in Jowzjan, Humayun Aini in Faryab, Assadulah Hamdam in Uruzgan, and Lawang Faizan (AKA Abdul Wahid) in Ghazni. Only the Uruzgan and Ghazni appointments have so far been made public; Karimi said President Karzai is still considering where to move the ousted governors. Karimi added that the role the new office will play in advising President Karzai on the hiring and firing of powerful provincial figures has prompted him and the director of the office, Ghulam Jelani Popal, to request a protective detail from the government. Several of these personnel changes were rumored to be in the works before Popal was appointed, but the Uruzgan appointment seems to reflect his influence (ref A). Biographical information on the four appointees follows.

TWO VACANCIES FILLED IN THE NORTH: JOWZJAN AND FARYAB

¶3. (SBU) The new Jowzjan governor is Hashim Zari, who is of mixed ethnic background and considers himself part of the so-called "Arab" ethnic group. Zari is from a prominent family in neighboring Maimana, Faryab province. He is reportedly close to recently deceased King Mohammad Zahir and the royal family, and is also on good terms with Uzbek strongman General Abdur Rashid Dostum and his Junbesh party. Zari lived in the United States and has a PhD, and was until his appointment an advisor to President Karzai. His brother, Mohammad Salih Zari, was the governor of Faryab from 2001-2003. His candidacy is supported by the UNAMA regional office, which considers him educated, well-connected ("in a good way"), and a stabilizing influence in the province. Zari negotiated the appointment of the competent and largely apolitical Faryab deputy governor Bares, to whom former Governor Ibrahimi delegated important tasks such as drafting the Provincial Development Plan. Zari's appointment in Jowzjan formalizes the removal of former governor Hamdard, who fled the province following violent clashes between his security guards and Dostum's Junbesh party supporters. The Dutch-led PRT in Maimana was disappointed that Zari, who had long been rumored for the position in Faryab, was appointed instead in Jowzjan.

¶4. (C) The new Faryab governor is Humayun Aini from Parwan province. He was an advisor in the Ministry of Interior, and previously National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief in Faryab and later an NDS chief in Kabul. Reportedly, Aini fled from Faryab to Kabul in 2003 when Uzbek strongman Dostum ousted then-governor Qazi Enayatt in a local coup. EU diplomats have described Aini as a "serial human rights abuser" for his use of torture while at NDS. ISAF adds that

KABUL 00003182 002 OF 003

Aini is alleged to have had a Panjsheer road construction contractor arrested so that he could compel the contractor, through torture, to sign over his equipment and have the contract re-awarded to a crony. Aini fills a vacancy in Faryab that resulted from a shake-up in July when previous governor Ibrahimi was moved to Takhar (ref B). The vacancy remained open while Karzai calculated how to counterbalance Dostum without provoking further Junbesh-influenced strife. Aini's appointment may yet be controversial for supporters of Dostum, but Karimi told POLOFF that, while Karzai did not appoint Dostum's chosen candidate, he "will not be upset" with the appointment.

TWO NEW GOVERNORS IN THE SOUTH: URUZGAN AND GHAZNI

¶5. (SBU) The new Uruzgan governor is Assadulah Hamdam, a Ghilzai Pashtun from Qalat, Zabul Province. He was a member of the communist PDPA (likely the Khalq faction) and served in the Afghan Army during the Soviet occupation. He spent several years in London, and his family reportedly still lives there. Previously, Hamdam ran a rural development NGO in Zabul. Director General Popal is from Uruzgan and reportedly conditioned his acceptance of his new position on previous governor Monib's early replacement. Monib told the PRT on September 12 that he may be appointed governor in one of the northern provinces. Hamdam and Popal were associates when they each ran local development NGOs in the south, and Hamdam likely shares Popal's reform agenda.

¶6. (C) The new Ghazni governor is Lawang Faizan (AKA Abdul Wahid), a Pashtun from Ghazni's Andar district. He was educated in a madrasa. Reportedly, he was a commander affiliated with Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) and/or the Taliban during and after the anti-Soviet jihad (He may have been the Taliban's commander in Zabul from 1996-2001). According to ISAF, he was in the Taliban diplomatic service. He may still claim the loyalties of numerous militiamen in restive Andar district. Faizan was recently accused of embezzling funds from a PRT Ghazni contract to clean irrigation canals; the work was never done, and Faizan has

returned only a portion of the money. Faizan's appointment in Ghazni confirms long-standing rumors of governor Patan's replacement. Patan was helpful on the Korean hostage issue and was respected in his previous post as Khost governor in 2004-6, but he was never popular in Ghazni. Patan told the Ambassador on August 24 that Faizan is connected to Kandahar governor Asadullah Khaled, a native of Ghazni's Nawa district and former Ghazni governor from 2001-2005. PRT Ghazni contacts have claimed that Faizan's appointment is partly an effort by Khaled to assert his continuing influence in Ghazni.

#### KARZAI'S CALCULATIONS

17. (C) COMMENT: Faizan's appointment could lead to very problematic relations between UNAMA, ISAF, and PRT Ghazni and the provincial government. Norwegian-led PRT Maimana may elect to distance itself from Aini's administration in Faryab. Karzai probably hopes that these controversial appointments will help him balance competing political factions and bring opponents into his tent. By replacing Patan, Karzai removes the last governor affiliated with the Afghan Millat party of Finance Minister Ahady, whose independent political ambitions are a challenge to the president. Patan's dismissal may have been Karzai's price for accepting Popal, deputy chairman of Millat, into the senior Local Administration position. Karzai may be gambling that Faizan retains enough credibility with insurgent fellow-travelers in Ghazni to lure them into an accommodation with the government. By appointing Aini to Faryab, Karzai is most likely striving to emplace a loyalist who won't provoke Dostum. Karzai continues to signal his irritation with international community oversight of his appointments (ref C); this round of controversial appointees may be an assertion of his independence. We are looking forward to an early opportunity to engage Popal on the extent of his influence both over the provincial governor appointments

KABUL 00003182 003 OF 003

process and over problematic governors like Aini and Faizan.  
END COMMENT.  
DELL